NN...

SEN-
DOU...

MY BODY ...

WAS IT ALWAYS THIS HEAVY?

SKRATCH SKRATCH

OH...

YEAH ...

AFTER DEATH #23

死後第23節

FOR AYA-SAMA, IT'S ONLY BEEN ABOUT 5 MIN-UTES ON THE OTHER SIDE.

THE CONCEPT OF TIME DOES NOT EXIST IN THE INTER-STICE.

SO IN THOSE 5 MIN-UTES, AYA-SAMA HAS GAZED INTO THE FU-TURE.

FSSSHH

OOKUMO

MOM, I FOUND IT.

THE OO-KUMO ES-TATE.

WOW, WHAT A BIG HOUSE.

MHMM ...

SHUU-ICHI, STAY ON YOUR BEST BEHAV-IOR AT ALL TIMES, OKAY?

IT'S NOT LIKE I CARE,

BUT WHY CAN AYA COME TO THIS SIDE?

HE'S ALIVE...

IN-DEED ...

I WAS SUR-PRISED AS WELL...

THE INTER-STICE IS NOT EXCLUSIVE TO THE DEAD.

VERY RARELY, THERE ARE THOSE OF THE LIVING WHO CAN CROSS TO THIS SIDE.

HE IS AN EXCEP-TION.

AYA-SAMA IS NOT JUST A COMPAN-ION.

WE ARE MOST GRATEFUL TO YOUR HUSBAND FOR THIS MUNIFICENT OPPOR-TUNITY.

NO, MA'AM.

MY, IT MUST HAVE BEEN A HASSLE TO TRA-VEL SO FAR.

MY SON SHOULD BE IN THE BACK.

GO AND SAY HELLO.

NO NEED TO BE SO FOR-MAL.

THINK OF THIS PLACE AS YOUR HOME.

TH... THANK YOU, MA'AM.

AYA MAY BE A BIT OF AN ODD-BALL, BUT I HOPE YOU TWO MANAGE TO GET ALONG.

GULP GULP GLUG GLUG

I WONDER WHAT SHE MEANT BY ODD-BALL...

AYA-SAMA... HMM.

.....

FUAHH

THE PHYS-ICAL BODY CAN BE QUITE STRAINING.

IT'S MUCH TOO HEAVY, EASILY TIRES OUT, AND REQUIRES REGULAR HYDRA-TION.

I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR YOU...

SEN-DOU.

RUFFLE

EH...

EH?

HOW DO YOU KNOW MY NA...

IT'S VERY ADMI-RABLE.

EVEN AFTER DEATH, YOU WORK FOR THE OOKUMO FAMILY AND LECTURE ME...

HERE, TAKE IT.

SO ... YOU'VE ALWAYS WORN GLASS-ES.

HUH?

WHAT ...?

HE REALLY IS... AN ODD-BALL.

THANKS FOR THE DRINK.

TEAR

SIP

GLUG GLUG

CHEERS.

KLINK!

. . . . . .

MO-MENTS CE-MENTED IN TIME.

EVERY-THING IS JUST A FAR DISTANT ME-MORY TO ME.

THESE MO-MENTS HAVE YET TO OCCUR ...

HOW-EVER, FOR AYA-SAMA,

GULP GULP

I DON'T NEED A SERVANT.

LET ME TAKE CARE OF THE SHOPPING FOR YOU. JUST TELL ME WHAT TO GET...

EH...

EHEHE

O...OH, AYA-SAMA MUST BE LONELY BECAUSE HE DOESN'T HAVE ANY FRIENDS.

OF COURSE! I WOULD LOVE TO!

HOW ABOUT YOU BE MY FRIEND INSTEAD, SEN-DOU?

:?

K
C
C...

SFX: LABORED BREATHING

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U

SABU-ROU...!

HUH ...

UH... NO, MY BAD.

WRONG PER-SON.

CAN I HELP YOU?

PLEASE, TAKE CARE...

NEXT CUS-TOMER.

OH, COM-ING.

ARE YOU OKAY?

:?

I KNOW IT IN MY MIND

AS WELL AS IN MY SOUL,

BUT MY BODY REACTED ON ITS OWN...

THANK YOU FOR SHOPPING WITH US.

BUT...

AN ACCI-DENT...

I CAN'T PREVENT SABUROU FROM SUC-CUMBING TO ILL-NESS...

IT'S AN INEVI-TABILITY.

AYA-SAMA.

NO ... I'M FINE.

AYA-SAMA? DID SOMETHING HAP-PEN?

WHAT'S TO COME IS ALREADY DETER-MINED...

THERE IS ONE CURIOUS MATTER THAT HAS ALWAYS BAFFLED ME...

ABOUT A YEAR AFTER I MET HIM,

AYA-SAMA HAD AN OUT-BURST OF SORTS ...

NOW I AM CON-VINCED IT HAD SOME-THING TO DO WITH THE INTER-STICE...

AYA-SAMA...

DON'T YOU NEED TO STUDY?

NAG NAG NAG NAG

IT'S JUST AS YOUR FATHER KEEPS SAYING!

YOU ARE TO BE THE NEXT HEAD OF THE OOKUMO FAMILY.

THAT MEANS YOU MUST LEAD EVERY-ONE. UNDER-STAND?

HEY

AYA-SAMA! ARE YOU EVEN LIS-TEN-ING?

HEY!

WAIT!!

DASH

STOOOP!

AYA-SAMAAAAAAA!!

AYA-SAMA, BECAME LOST...

I BE-LIEVE...

I KNOW...

I KNOW, DAMMIT...

BUT...

YOU'RE SPRINTING FOR GOD'S SAKE!!

THAT'S AN UNDERSTATEMENT!

STOP ACTING LIKE A CHILD!

MY BODY IS OUT OF CONTROL!

MHMM,

THANK YOU.

Y...
YEAH!

BE CARE-FUL.

W...
WELL,

SEE YOU TO-MOR-ROW!

YAAA AAAAA AHH!!

I CAN'T KEEP UP!!

YOU HATE STUDYING WAY TOO MUCH!

MY WORD!

S...SO FAST!

WHETHER OR NOT ONE HAS A BODY MAKES A CONSI-DERABLE DIFFER-ENCE...

AYA-SAMA IS LIKE ANOTHER PERSON IN THE INTER-STICE...

AYA IS NOT OMNI-POTENT.

IN THE MORTAL WORLD, HE IS JUST A HUMAN BEING,

TIED DOWN BY THE WEAK-NESS OF HIS OWN BODY.

I AM SURE AYA-SAMA IS PAINFULLY AWARE OF THAT...

IF MAKO-SAN HAD NOT COME TO THIS SIDE,

WHO WOULD HAVE TAKEN SABU-ROU-KUN'S SOUL ...?

NOT ONLY THAT... MIYO,

YOU WOULD HAVE BECOME A WRAITH INSTEAD OF A COMPAN-ION...

MIKOTO-SAN WOULD NEVER HAVE BEEN REINCAR-NATED.

AND THAT UNBORN CHILD...

IF MAKO-SAN HAD NOT COME TO THIS SIDE,

EVERY-THING WOULD BE AWRY.

НДД

НДД

НДД...

НДД

НДД

I KNOW ...

I KNOW ALL TOO WELL...

IF YOU KNOW...

THEN YOU SHOULD TELL THEM...

...MANY PEO-PLE?

MANY PEO-PLE...

PEOPLE WILL DIE HERE...

MIYO...

TELL AYA...

THAT I DON'T CARE IF I BE-COME A WRAITH...

IT'S THAT HE CAN'T.

IT'S NOT THAT HE SHOULDN'T INTER-VENE...

YOU'RE INCOR-RECT, AYA-SAMA ...

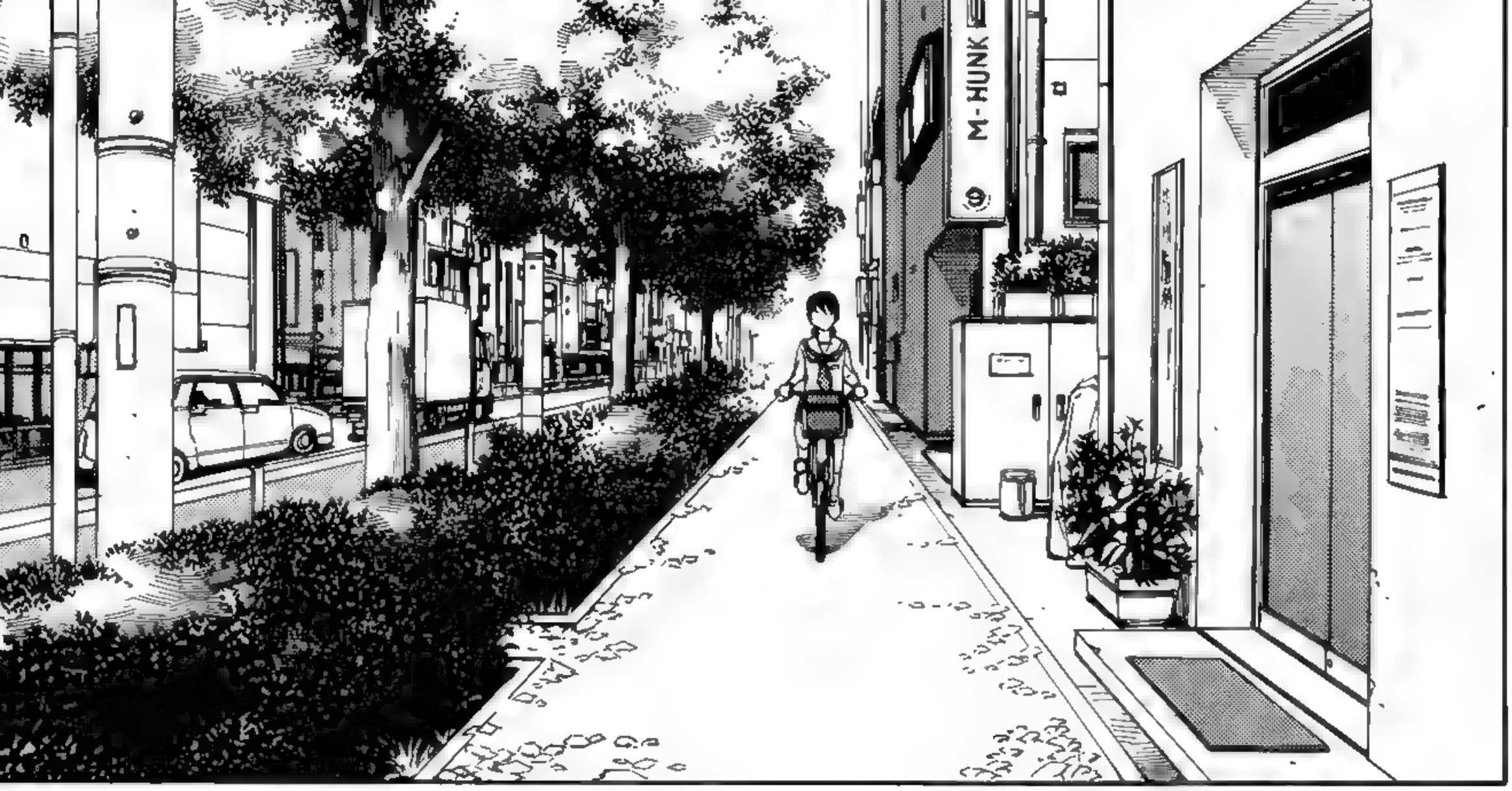
I CAN'T ... I CAN'T DO ANY-THING...

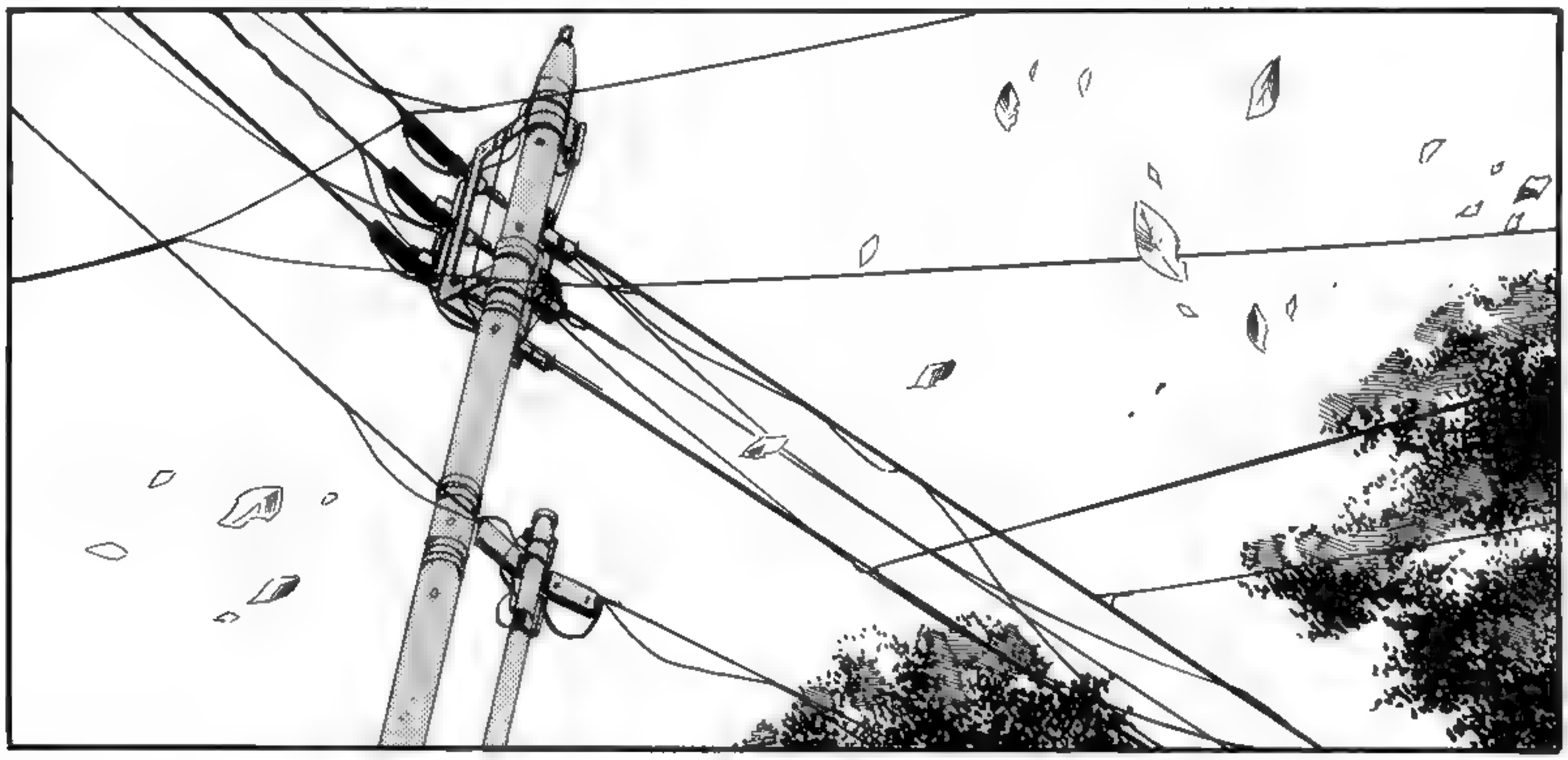
I'M POWER-LESS...

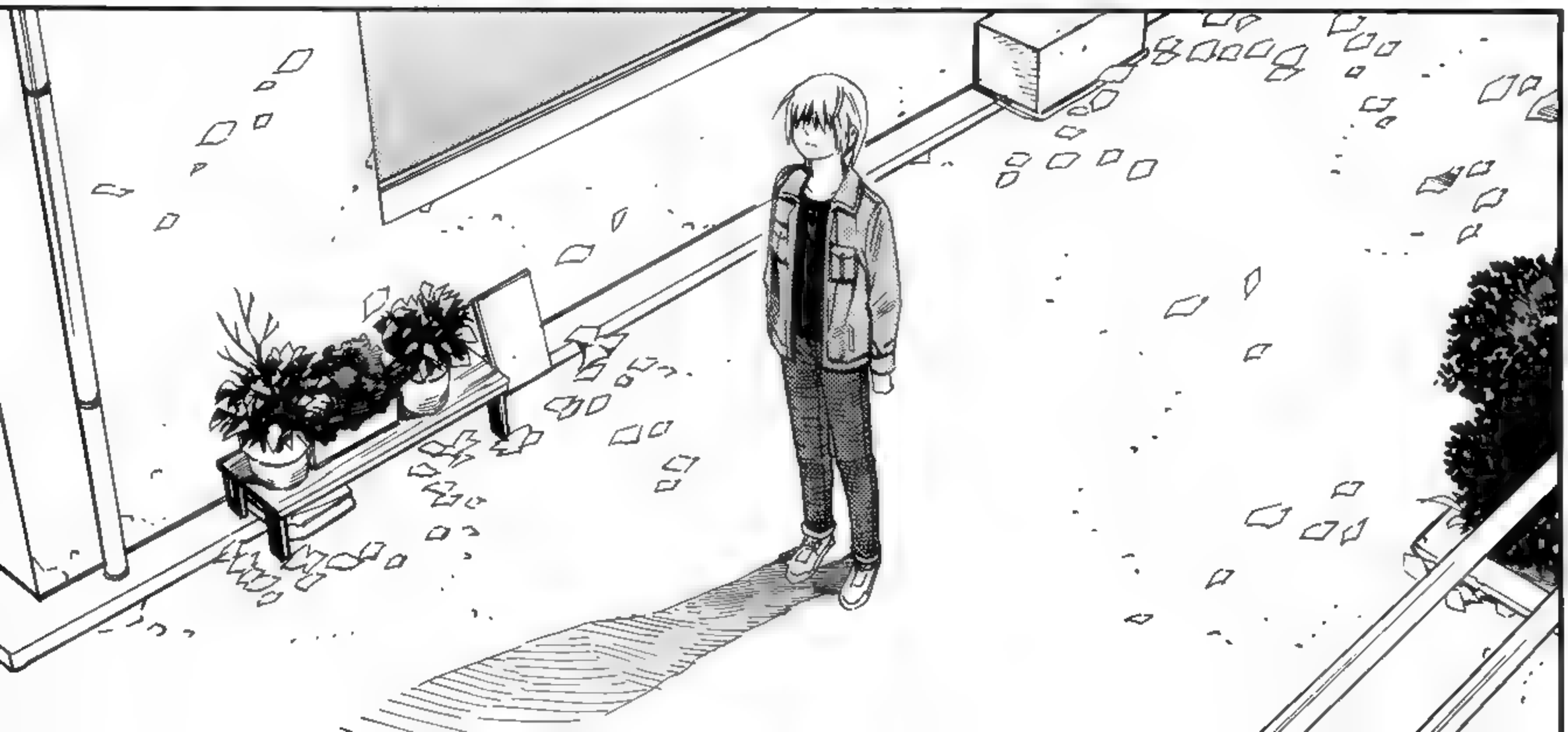
YOU HAVE ALREADY DONE EVERYTHING THAT MUST BE DONE.

THERE IS...

NOTHING LEFT TO DO...


M-HUNK





I WAS WOR-RIED SICK ABOUT YOU!

GOSH!

AYA-SAMA!

OH!

I KNOW ...

THERE WAS AP-PARENTLY AN ACCIDENT AT THE CROSS-WALK...

AYA-SAMA...

WHY ARE YOU CRYING ...?

HUH ...?

.....!

YES...

YOU ARE STILL ALIVE...

AYA-SAN, YOU...

.....

I SEE...

TRU-LY...

THIS IS FINE ...

DON'T CRY... AYA-SAN.

I DID MY BEST TO LIVE MY LIFE TO ITS FULL-EST...

AYA-SAN ...

I...

AYA-SAMA ...

SHE EN-DURED IT FOR SO LONG ...

WHAT SUFFER-ING AWAITED HER...

SHE KNEW ...

.....?

TRY AND LIVE YOUR LIFE TO ITS FUL-LEST, SEN-DOU.

UM... OKAY ...

PEO-PLE... CAN'T LIVE ALONE...

PEO-PLE... CAN'T PASS THROUGH THE GATE ALONE...

TO CONNECT PEOPLE TOGETH-ER...

PEOPLE WISH TO CONNECT WITH OTHERS...

THAT IS THE ROLE OF A COMPANION...

COMPANION

THE END

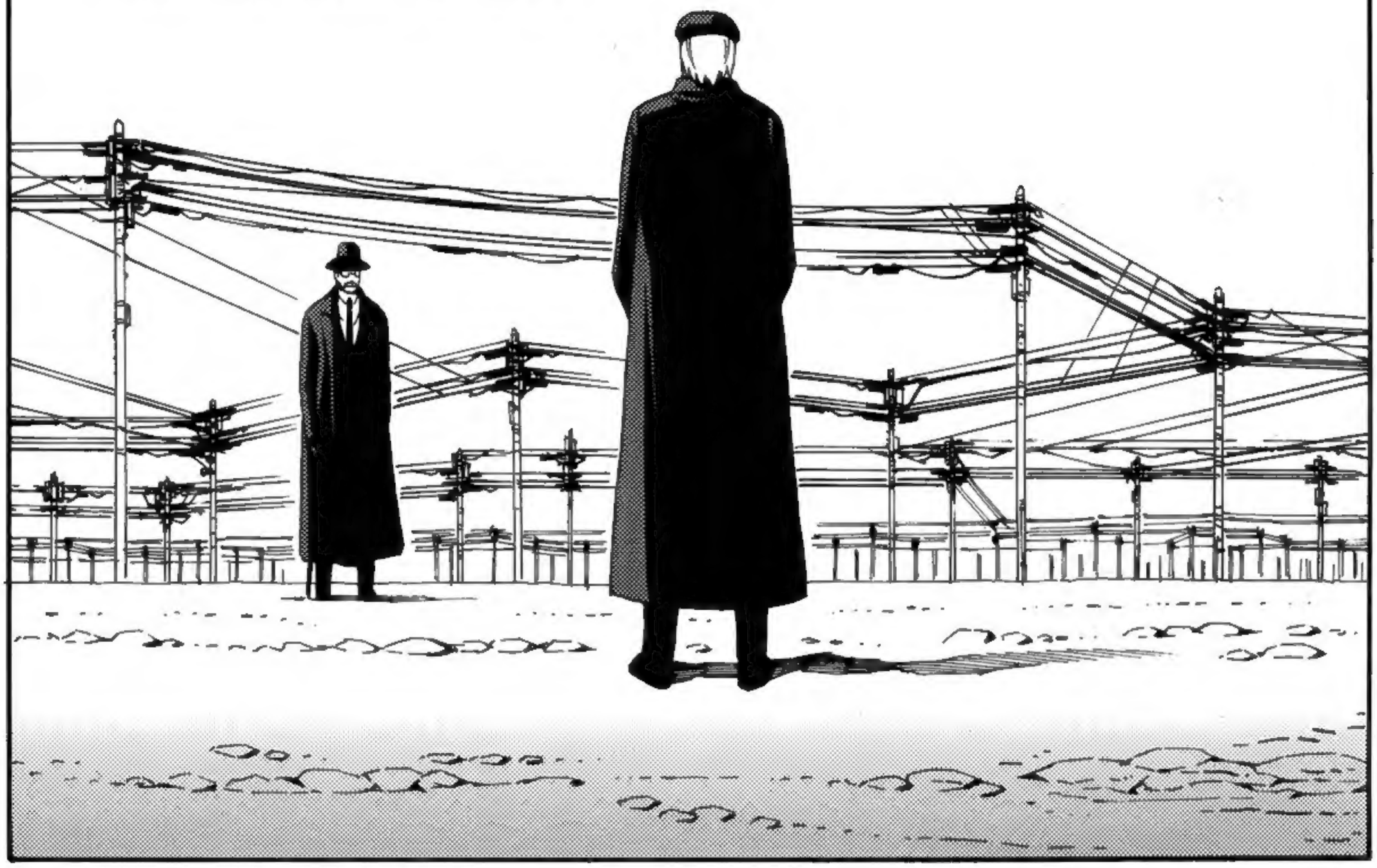
COMPANION

AKIHITO YOSHITOMI

— 4 —

AFTERWORD

I present to you the finale of Companion. I was struck by a wave of tiredness when finishing this series. Usually, I am able to power through my fatigue with sheer adrenaline, but this constant state of tension left me suffocating. I thought I had prepared myself for writing a story about death and the human soul. Never did I imagined it would wear me down so much.



People tend to shy away from the subject of death. They avoid thinking about it. Maybe it's because there is no real answer, no matter how hard you try to discern one. In this story, Mako passed on through the gate. Who knows whether or not this is a suitable answer, but I hope it at least captured your consideration

I said earlier that I am very tired, but I still want to draw more of Aya and little Sendou.

To tell the truth, I am planning to write a story about Aya and little Sendou, but I will save that for another day. Anyway, thank you for sticking with this series until the end

Finally, to my editors, Yamamoto-sama and Kurihara-sama: Let's do something together again

September, 2008 Akihito Yoshitomi

We finally finished Companion! It's been almost a year since we started, and I'm amazed by how much we got done looking back. Also, kudos to mwsmws22 for putting a bunch of time into this project!

- SiberOwl

Companion is the first series our group has completed from start to finish. I learned so much about scanlating from working on this project and gained tons of experience along the way. The quality of our releases may have improved, but we really ended up dragging our feet on the last volume. That's how it goes. Hopefully, you all enjoyed reading as much as I did editing. Thanks for the support and feel free to check out some of our latest projects.

- mwsmws22

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